TIPS FOR BEGINNER ARTISTS

WITH EXAMPLES FROM MY EXPERIENCE AND RESOURCES I USE

FIRST EDITION (03/03/26)

Made by Sallina Christine

Issued by CIERGE GOUGE SPECULUM studios

INDEX

0. INTRODUCTION.....2
1. TAKE IT AS LIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE.....2
2. PLAY!.....3
4. CREATE EVERY SO OFTEN.....3
5. GIVE EVERYTHING A MEANING AND INTENTION.....4
6. READ AS BOTH AUTHOR AND READER.....4
7. DO NOT “MARRY” A SPECIFIC STYLE.....4
8. DON’T BE AFRAID TO LOOK ANYWHERE FOR INSPIRATION (WITH LIMITS).....5
9. CHALLENGE, CHALLENGE.....5
10. GET CRITICIZED OR CRITICIZE YOURSELF.....6
11. DREAM BIG, BUT DON’T BE DISHEARTENED.....6
12. REGISTER EVERYTHING.....6
13. SHOW, DON’T TELL.....7
14. A.I. IS A TOOL, NOT A REPLACEMENT.....7
15. GET EDUCATION.....7
16. DARE TO BREAK RULES.....8
17. HAVE WORDS FOR BREAKFAST.....8
RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT.....8
GLOSSARY.....9

0. INTRODUCTION

Art is a blessing upon humanity, and strictly humanity: you don’t see badgers singing with lutes or seals interpreting *Hamlet*. Perhaps you could’ve seen elephants and dolphins in zoos being trained to smear paint on canvases with their noses. They might understand what they’re being asked to do, but they’re only doing it for fish or peanuts. They do not understand what art is or interpret it. Only we can with our human reason. Art accentuates our specialty and superiority over animals. Animals can feel like us but not think like us. Technology advances a few steps ahead with us, and may be able to replicate many things we do. Machines these days can move brushes, type scripts, code games, among many other actions. Unlike animals or us, machines aren’t conscious; unlike only us, they don’t possess reason. They are trained but don’t understand what they’re doing. They may be able to define what art is or how to interpret it, but deep inside, they’re not thinking. There is no feeling in those machines, unlike animals or us.

Once again, I say: art is strictly human, and neither animals nor machines will ever be able to replace us in that area.

Can you understand *Las Meninas*? Can you draw your favorite character from memory, even if it’s bad? Can you criticize a show for its plot inconsistency? If your answer to any of them is yes, you are blessed, no matter what is going on in your life. If your answer is no, you’ll soon change your mind…

1. TAKE IT AS LIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE

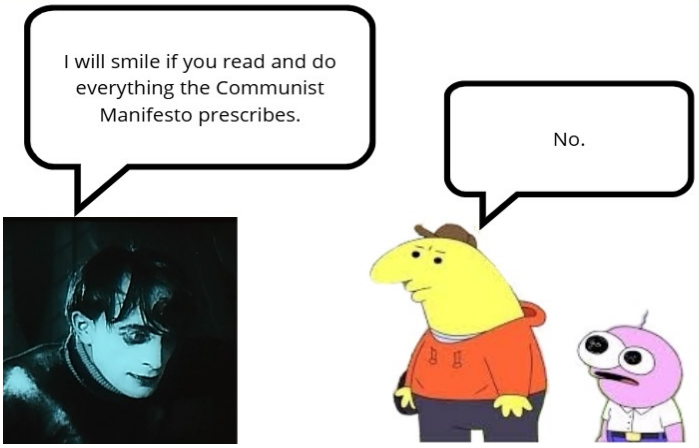
My best works have stemmed from very simple, usually joke or “fanmade”, ideas. The calmer you are, the better your ideas and thoughts flow.

EXAMPLE: *Chromatic Schism* is perhaps my first masterpiece ever. Nevertheless, this musical started as personal Clash Royale headcanons…

2. PLAY!

I also recommend playing with your characters like dolls: put them in random scenarios and make them do random things (as long as they're in character). Anything brilliant can come from that.

EXAMPLE: This morning, I imagined what would happen if the Smiling Friends were tasked with making Es, the pure-evil villain from *Der Schlimmste Mensch Auf Erden*, smile. This was the result:



4. CREATE EVERY SO OFTEN

Don't be afraid to make low-quality pilots of your shows/lineart of your drawings/demo of your songs. Just make it exist first, then make it perfect later. It'll eventually come to shape. Doing that will also help you build confidence.

Write a short song, short poem, short contortion act, short episode, short trailer, short anything. Make imperfect to learn how to make perfect.

In case you're not that good at making fully original works, I suggest you try to make remakes or AU's of other existing works.

EXAMPLE: During a period of art block and desperation to release something, I chose to make a radio play based on Fallout. As of now, it's going really well.

5. GIVE EVERYTHING A MEANING AND INTENTION

Make everything have a meaning, including characters' names (if possible). Every artist has an intention with art. No intention means no art. What would you like to communicate through your piece? Perhaps warn about hypocrisy in a novel? About being grateful in a video game? Not being stubborn in a poem?

EXAMPLE: In *The Pope's Artist*, I aim to talk about gratitude and how not waste big opportunities through the journey of Gilles, a reluctant artist. Also, Gilles means "young goat" in Greek, and goats are usually reluctant to obey orders – especially when they're young. This meaning matches Gilles's rebellion to obey the Pope's order to sail to Italy to help build a church and paint its ceilings, the friars' petition to paint a portrait of a monk, and the abbess's petition to fix 3 broken archangel sculptures. Yes, his workload is rather heavy, but he learns many important life lessons through it.

6. READ AS BOTH AUTHOR AND READER

You'll quickly notice if something is cheesy if you consider how you would feel if you read that from somewhere else.

EXAMPLE: Whenever I get a difficult idea, one where it's difficult to know if it's cringe or worth using, I quickly picture how I would react if it were featured on a show/book I like and consider using it depending on if I'd accept it or not.

7. DO NOT “MARRY” A SPECIFIC STYLE

Think of genres, themes, techniques, and styles like food: Try to eat, taste, and cook everything! Extra points if the genres/styles are related in some way. I also invite you to create in multiple art forms.

If you’re a musician, try making your own album art. If you’re a writer, try composing the music for your show. If you’re a painter, try turning your images into songs. If you’re a coder, try making algorithmic art. If you’re an actor, try writing your own play.

EXAMPLE: In case you can tell, I’m an aspiring polymath. I have experience in music, painting, writing and acting. I’ve used those abilities to make a radio play where I wrote the script, arranged the music, voiced the protagonist (I chose this because I saw it as humbling. See glossary for more details.)

8. DON’T BE AFRAID TO LOOK ANYWHERE FOR INSPIRATION (WITH LIMITS)

Can’t think of a good name for a character? Visit a baby name website. Tired of baby name websites? Read an underrated book and name your characters after those in the book. Don’t want to copy other characters’ names? Name them after authors. Think that’s too plain? Visit, e.g., registered educator lists and name your teacher character after one of them (I don’t recommend using the same formula for naming sex-offender characters, though).

You can also draw inspiration from unrelated areas, see the example below.

EXAMPLE: Layne, Sarah’s pet kitten, is named after Layne Staley, the lead singer for Alice in Chains. This kitten cannot sing.

9. CHALLENGE, CHALLENGE…

Make your pieces a challenge to understand and enjoy for your readers and a challenge for you to make as an author. Make your readers and you grow after reading/watching your piece. But don’t make it too tedious, lest none of you will want to even touch it.

EXAMPLE: To fully understand the lore of each protagonist in *Freshladies*, a short 2-season show about the normal lives of 3 girls in their high school freshman years, you have to read 1 book about the brother of one of the girls, and listen to a bardic poem about an exploited serf from the 1200s who meets one of the protagonists in purgatory in season 2.

NOTE: I like to think about this phrase: “Art is meant to disturb the comforted and comfort the disturbed.”

10. GET CRITICIZED OR CRITICIZE YOURSELF

Be prepared to be criticized (and, sadly, bullied). For this, you must know how to identify honest opinions from empty negativity.

Learn to accept any type of criticism, even if it’s just bullying, and you’ll be able to learn how to improve your art and how to manage bullying properly without losing motivation.

EXAMPLE: For some reason, I feel personally attacked whenever I get corrected. But I totally understand that whoever corrects me is doing it with the intention of seeing me improve, which is great. Whether I think about this or not, my internal rage doesn’t go away. I’ve decided to take my time to adequately respond to criticism and accept it as I should.

11. DREAM BIG, BUT DON’T BE DISHEARTENED

Ask yourself why you want to become an artist and what you plan to do with that purpose. Imagine every possibility: from homelessness-

inducing failure to becoming more important than Shakespeare. That might sound a bit too dreamy, but believe me: anything can happen in this life. I understand that thinking about your piece being a flop may be very demotivating, but I really suggest you prepare for everything, including success. Don’t think of failure as your end, but as your next chapter.

Think: What would I do/say if I got the chance to perform on Broadway/get my game played in GDQ/to receive a Grammy? How should I act during interviews? What do I want to communicate to others?

12. REGISTER EVERYTHING

Whether you get a random idea at night, draw the torso of a new character during class, or make lore in your head

Please, PRETTY PLEASE

Make sure to write it down or type in a document. If you already have work done but haven’t registered yet, then close this book and come back only after you’ve written down what you must. Also, make sure not to lose those registers: store those pages in a folder or documents in a USB. Once you lose something, you will regret it with so much pain.

EXAMPLE: I’ve been working on *Big Game* since 2022 and, honestly, I haven’t registered much of it aside from my memory. Many cool things I’ve made for this show are hanging on loose strings of my memory, which I usually forget. If I totally lose these ideas, then the show will no longer have its intended, delicious spice.

13. SHOW, DON’T TELL

I know this is a very specific tip, but I wish to stress this because it’s easier to find an albino roach in the Antarctic than a modern artist who follows this principle.

EXAMPLE: Instead of saying: “He was sad during dinner and missed his brother”, you should say: “He sat down and gave his plate an empty look. He picked at it, put the spoon down, and placed his hand under the plate to pretend to hold his brother’s warm hand again.”

14. A.I. IS A TOOL, NOT A REPLACEMENT.

It’s ok If you use A.I. to research the economy in the Dark Ages, but not to write scripts/make images/pretty much make art for you. Extra penalty if you take that unedited generated material and call it yours.

NOTE: Think of this phrase: “The problem isn’t machines thinking like humans, but humans thinking like machines.”

15. GET EDUCATION

If possible, pursue formal education in a course or academy, or pay attention to your literature/art class if you have it in school. Or find free lessons online -no need to spend too many resources to become a great artist.

EXAMPLE: My current education in creative writing comes from 5 different YouTube channels, and my literature and cinema teacher.

Another way you can learn to become a better artist is to watch both classic masterpieces and hot garbage. You will know what and what not to do.

EXAMPLE: I’m watching *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* to do a good job in my movie *Der Schlimmste Mensch Auf Erden.* I also watch *Hazbin Hotel* to observe what happens when the *show, don’t tell* principle is ignored

16. DARE TO BREAK RULES

Break rules! But explain through the rest of your piece why you've done it and show that you understand that you've made a "mistake" according to regular art conventions. If you don't clarify this, you will look like a total dummy. Also, don't *tell* everybody you understand, but *show* it.

17. HAVE WORDS FOR BREAKFAST

If you read dictionaries like a daily newspaper or play games involving words, you can find and learn the definition of new, intriguing words to use in your literature, words you can transform into images, words to string an idea for a plot, words that are crucial to music vocabulary, etc.

EXAMPLE: Playing *Wordtris* taught seven new words. Scramble is next on my to-play list.

RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT

Lucas Alpay – writing advice

Toon – writing advice

Proko – free & paid art advice and lessons (you should totally check out the video where they spank a CGI skeleton)

Aprendercine – free filmmaking lessons (in Spanish)

Eric Bates – blogs and advice for aspiring circus performers

Ludofonía – videogame music analysis and free music lessons (in Spanish)

Estudio FAE – paid acting course (in Spanish)

GLOSSARY

1. *Las Meninas:* A painting made by Diego Velázquez.

2. Chromatic Schism: A musical I’m making about a pair of twins that separate into two different kingdoms.

Big Game: A short 2-season crime drama show I’m making that has random episodes made entirely within a different genre.

2. *The Pope’s Artist:* An idea I have for a PopCap-style game where you are a French polymath artist that is called by the Pope (a fictional one) to help fix a church and paint its ceiling and many other artistic adventures.

3. Freshladies: Another short 2-season daily life show I’m making as well. This one doesn’t randomly change genre, but it does randomly change theme.

4. Fallout 7 (usually referred to as “my/the radioplay”): A radioplay I made